



THEME AND VARIATIONS

By ROBERT G. SIMPSON

The five-dollar prize, in the shape of a War Savings Certificate has been awarded Bob Simpson for his short story: "Theme and Variations."

It was Christmas Eve, and it looked as though Dickens' pages had come to life. There were people about, helter-skelter mobs of people, laden with bundles and buried in anticipation; there were cars in the streets, crushing the fresh snow into grey-brown puddles of slush; in homes there was holly and mistletoe, shouting and laughter; but in jails there was repentant crime, and in hospitals sickness and death. Wherever man was he knew it was Christmas Eve, and each in his own way was seeking the happiness his life had to offer. Some were finding it in remote corners and some right at hand, while others, pitifully, were searching in vain.

Tony Randall left the office late. He was sorry he had stared so long. Carol wouldn't like it, and to explain that the president had thought there was too much unconsumed whisky in the world wasn't going to make her any more amenable. Tony couldn't understand his wife. Her social desires were confused; the way she pushed him into that high-brow clique, yet drew away from his business associates. Culture. Hell! What he needed was a little more money. Carol didn't seem to realize that if it weren't for his hard-earned income she couldn't be the patroness of questionable art that she was. But tonight he would have to listen to a bunch of fops talk about "form" and "rhythm" while they got quietly drunk on pink champagne. Oh well, Carol would enjoy herself and that was the main thing. Christmas Eves were made for women and children. Women and children. . . Damned German raider torpedoed another transport. . .

Tony stepped harder on the accelerator. He liked to feel the powerful whirl of the wheels, futile on the icy roads.

Carol paced angrily to and fro across the library floor. A warm blaze was licking lazily around the logs in the grate. The clock on the mantel said five-forty-five, and Tony promised to be home at four-thirty. He must have been with that insufferable Bennett person. The bore. And Tony was becoming just like him. Couldn't he realize that she was trying to make him happy? She realized that money was important, and that Tony was doing splendidly. Yes, splendidly. Why only yesterday Margo Phillips had remarked that for so young a man. . . There's the doorbell. It must be Tony.

Carol reached the door just as the maid appeared from the pantry. It wasn't Tony. It was some grizzled old man who wanted to shovel the path.

"Why yes," Carol said. "It has stopped snowing, hasn't it?"
"Aye, ma'am, it has that. Fine night now."
"Good. Ring again when you're finished, will you?"
Carol watched the man set to work with bent back and tired arms. Poor old devil, on Christmas Eve, too. And later, when he was through, she gave him five dollars and a wish for a Merry Christmas, and a silent hope that he wouldn't spend it in a tavern.

The old man's name was Joe. He lived down by the railroad station on the other side of the tracks, about a mile and a half from the Randall's by the shortest route. On his way home he passed many taverns, but he never went in. He was thirsty, of course, but the crinkle of the new bills in his pocket slaked his thirst and caused a glow in his veins that no amount of beer could ever produce. He was happy, immensely happy, and he dreamed of the "last lady" with excited exuberance. Five dollars for a path only twenty feet long! God, but she was the real sort. And that dress. . . white satin, he wagered, and right down to the floor, and that sort of silver jacket that sparkled and reflected the flickering firelight. What he'd give to see his old woman done up like that! But the butcher came first; that big roast of beef and then turnips and potatoes and, oh yes, something for the kids, something for the kids. . .

Tony arrived home at about six-thirty. Carol was waiting for him.
(Continued on Page Three)

"MERRY CHRISTMAS,
I SUPPOSE"

A very RESERVED greeting for an Englishman

Oh, I say!
Christmas, as it were, is on its way!
Reindeer, you know,
And snow,
And Saint Nicholas (nice chap, the Saint. Stout fellow!
Stuffs stuff down the chimney—dashed sporting of him—makes one feel really rather mellow).
Now, look here, old egg—I hope this doesn't sound like a lot of ghastly rot—
But you know how a chappie feels around the good old twenty-fifth December, eh what?
The old cockles of the heart get so ruddy warm.
Don't think me an utter ass if I offer the Season's greetings and all that sort of thing—merely a matter of form.
May your presents be not too mouldy, and your Christmas cards not too grim;
May there be quite a decent amount of brandy on your plum-pudding—oh, dash it all, may it positively SWIM!
I hope you can gravitate your little bit of stuff toward a whopping big bunch of mistletoe.
And when she's standing under it I hope everything will be just absolutely-lutely A-1, don't you know?
What with the blooming old mistletoe, and you, and Her, ReTHEE!
Yes indeed, all very jolly.
I hope—HA! HAW!—you don't sit on any HOLLY!
(Dashed funny, what?)
Oh, it's not?
Frightfully sorry, old bean.)
May your nocturnal revelry positively shake the old rafters,
With no "morning-after,"
If you know what I mean!
May your merry old Yule be really merry old English and not—heaven forbid—Yankee or Colonial.
May even the weather be English, by Jove—a spot of rain, a spot of sleet—ah, yes, perfectly pneumonial.
And on New Year's Eve you must positively stay up all night;
Oh, quite.
I daresay you won't retire until one a.m.
(Ahem!)
Never too old to be a ripping old night-hawk!
Fine old English gentleman, weary but cheery, that's the way to talk!
And I hope your Christmas tree isn't too rum—
Good Lord, old chum!
Horribly sorry to pop off this way, but—you see—
Well—ah—four o'clock, and—you know how it is—well, dash it all—TEA!
But seriously, quite seriously, England, with whatever mock flippancy we address you—
To every gallant soul on that gallant isle—Merry Christmas!
God Bless You!
—ISOBEL KNEELAND.

Wanted—One
Cartoonist

By Katinka Aikins

As a matter of fact I don't want a cartoonist at all. "At least, not yet, because I have only just started to think up captions for cartoons. To be perfectly frank I have only thought of one caption, and that was a couple of weeks ago when I was sitting around in between lectures with nothing better to do. I thought at the time that it was pretty funny, and I still think it's pretty funny. The whole project however, is spiked with difficulties, because I can't draw.

I never have been able to draw. I found that out the day I entered Grade 1, because one of the first things we had to do was to draw a maple leaf. I don't suppose there are very many Canadian children who have not, at one time or another, had to draw a maple leaf. It seems to be as much a part of our education as reading or writing. I don't know if Scotch and English children have to sit around drawing thistles and oak leaves, but I do know that Canadian children spend a lot of time sitting around drawing maple leaves from every conceivable angle.

I fell into difficulties right away through failure to read instructions. I very rarely read instructions anyway, and the thought of reading anything entitled "Hints to Our Little Artist" nauseated me even at that early age. This habit of ignoring instructions has landed me at one time and another in some pretty peculiar situations, like the time I fed my sister a large tablespoon of Vanilla Extract instead of Castoria. Somehow the Vanilla had found its way into the bathroom so naturally I thought it was the Castoria. However that is beside the point. As far as this painting business was concerned I felt that I was one little artist who could do alright by herself. I successfully ignored Rules one and two, which were to keep your brush and paints all spick and span, so that in a very short time my brush was practically unusable, and my paints were indistinguishable. The result of all this was that when I started to paint my maple leaf I produced something in an off-shade purple. After this preliminary fiasco I got in deeper and deeper, painting and re-painting my maple leaf until it was so thick with paint that it used to stand off the paper. I always had the vague hope that through sheer persistence I would eventually hit the right color scheme, but of course I never did. In its most early stages my maple leaf didn't look much like the original, and by the time I had finished with it, it looked like nothing at all. At first my teacher tried in a half-hearted sort of way to guide my fumbling brush, but in the end she gave up and left me to deal with maple leaves in my own way. That was alright with me too.

When I finally graduated from the maple leaf stage I was plunged into something far worse. For two years I attended a school where we were required to illustrate most of our homework. During this period I passed some hours which I can only describe as soul-shaking. However, an old maple leaf painter is not easily daunted, and I struggled along somehow until one day our misguided Scripture teacher assigned us the task of drawing the Angels of Death and Pain. I think now that anyone who is silly enough to ask a lot of twelve-year-old children to draw Angels of Death and Pain deserves anything she gets, but maybe she didn't deserve what she got from me.

To begin with I lumped my two angels into one, because I knew perfectly well that I could never make any distinction between an Angel of Death and an Angel of Pain, and I saw no point in drawing two identical angels. Having reached this decision I proceeded to draw a pin-figure in a floating position. To draw a pin-figure in a floating position is not so easy as it sounds, because no matter how you go about it, it looks exactly like what it is—a pin-figure drawn sideways on a piece of paper. It doesn't look like an Angel of Death and Pain, or an Angel of anything else.
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With this issue the
Daily suspends
publication until
Friday, January 17

A Christmas Message
From Principal James

Mr. Alfred Noyes, in that delightful memory of London which he calls *Flos Mercatorum*, tells us of the thoughts that the bells of the City evoked in the minds of "the prentices of Cheape". Richard Whittington, weary and homesick, was not the only lad who heard a message of encouragement: there is a long procession of men and women who, like Trotty Veck, have listened to the chimes when there was no other voice to soften loneliness.

You will hear the chimes ring in this Christmastide, and I hope that the bells will bring a message of good cheer to each of you. "Peace on earth to men of good will" is the greeting that echoes down the corridors of time at this season of the year and, even though today may be over-shadowed by clouds for some of us, the voice of the bells reminds us that the spirit of Christmas is an important part of that ideal which must inspire our reconstruction of society when this war has been won.

May I extend to each of you, and to your relatives and friends, my best wishes for a very happy Christmas, and express the hope that the coming year will bring each of us a step nearer to the attainment of the goal toward which we are striving.

F. CYRIL JAMES,

Principal and Vice-Chancellor,
McGill University.

Jo's Busy Week-end

By Dorothy Taylor-Stoll

It was Friday, and wet Jerry felt sorry for himself. It wasn't at all comfortable driving in the rain, especially when the darn top wouldn't stay up. Besides he was hungry! Cursing life in general, he skidded around that last left curve, thundered past his old red house and jammed the car in the mud-lane between the trees. That was over! With cold pipe clamped between his teeth, he snatched the keys from the engine and hurried to empty the trunk. Blast!! Water trickled down his nose from a water-soaked brim, and jerking his hat off viciously, began to drag bundles from the piled-up trunk. He stuffed his coat pockets to overflowing, hung a well-laden pail in the crook of his elbow, and squelched up the muddy path.

"Hello there!" The rain dripped down from the trees persistently, and Jerry, grumbling and biling his pipe, glanced toward the lawn belonging to the red house.

"Hell, now what?"

He saw two bare feet, half-covered in straw sandals, slim brown ankles and legs merging into a white one-piece outfit, and a small little body topped with golden hair. It was that same girl, he could tell by her voice. He'd seen her the night he'd rented the cottage to her family, and she'd been smiling.

"How are you?" She was smiling again, and at him.

"Er. . . Fine. Very fine, thanks, and you?" Packages and pail fell to the ground as he stared. "You're the girl they called Jo the other night aren't you?"

"Huh-huh. . . And you're. . . Jerry?"

"That's right."

"Been having trouble with your hood, eh?" She nodded sympathetically, covering grimy car and owner in a quick wet-lashed glance.

"Yeah. It jammed just after I left the highway, so I bore it." (He wondered what in the world she was doing outside in the rain.)

"By the way, aren't you getting wet? It's raining yet, you know." He was just a little bewildered. All the girls he had ever known hated to get wet. It took their hair down. But hers curled in little wisps over her shiny brown forehead.

"Oh, no. I don't mind the rain," she laughed. "It's lovely, isn't it? Jerry wasn't quite so enthusiastic, but decided that he could bear it if she could, and walked over to (Continued on Page Three)

The Staff and Reporters
of the Daily
Wish You All
A Very Merry Christmas
and A
Happy New Year

Conversation
Piece

By Irving Layton

Ever since Carlyle set the fashion, people have admired silent men. Taking the hint from him, they have endowed them with deep pools of wisdom and tremendous unused stores of energy. For contra, the man of loose tongue, the lively chatterbox has always had to fight against the world's disdain. Even the compliment, "He's a good conversationalist," carries with it a faint suggestion of mockery. Why that should be so, Carlyle's influence apart, only the angels can tell. And even they, remembering Carlyle, may refrain from speaking.

Wise as I believe my fellow-men to be, I think that their devotion to the ideal of the silent man is a sad mistake. Certainly I have found the reasons usually offered in defence of their prejudice shallow, unconvincing and baseless.

I shall try to explain briefly why I think so.

Now take the present war. It's a big thing, isn't it? Over half of Europe, people are killing each other in right good earnest. They're putting all their energies into the matter and, on the whole, it can be said they're doing a creditable job. When you stop to think of it, it's wonderful how the belligerent governments are doing each other's skin clearance, dynamiting messy streets and hovels that should have been destroyed long ago. All this without any previous agreement or consent between the respective governments. Here, if anywhere, the political scientist, if he have but the patient will, may explore the ripe possibilities of international amity and obligation.

After this war is over, perhaps men will create a new League of Nations; profiting from the mistakes of the old, they will not attempt to outlaw war entirely. It always seemed to me that the old League tried to accomplish too much. Boys will be boys, and there's a little bombing in everyone's blood. Let's face the facts. And if we do, we'll get the various governments of the world to agree periodically to bomb each others slums and garrets into the blue skies. Say, in about every ten years.

I'm sure that in ten years any self-respecting government will see to it that enough slums exist as suitable target. After all, one mustn't disappoint a friendly neighbor.

The new League will simply confine itself to drawing up proper regulations for the removal of the natives to safer areas. Since they may have some sort of a silly attachment for their wretched dwellings, force may be necessary. Or again, they just may not be able to understand the pressing exigencies of realpolitik.

Perhaps the reader has already settled himself into the comfortable armchair of his prejudices and has dismissed me for a chatterbox. If so, I glory in the compliment but I must try desperately to get him to read on. For, as I've already said this war is a big thing and calls for such a tremendous exercise of mind and imagination that anything else previously thought about or imagined won't do.

And thinking and imagining, if you're really going to be logical about them, can mean only one thing: talk, talk, talk.

The amazing fact about this war is not that buildings are being blown skyhigh and homes reduced to fragment and rubble; no, the truly amazing thing is that nobody seems to be very excited that these things are happening. Is that due, someone asks, to shell-shock or somnambulism? Neither, I think. It's just that people won't talk. They've been brought up in the false tradition of the diffident larynx. They have been persuaded by unscrupulous men who exploit their silence that there's something positively ignoble about opening one's mouth, unless it is to gargle. Every day since the war began they've been told that the nation's best effort must begin with a rigid disciplining of that unruly member—the tongue.

Silent we stand, loquacious we fall!

Now, as a theory that may sound very attractive. Unfortunately, it won't stand up to the facts. History and psychology both flatly contradict it. No matter how tempting it might be to visualize a nation of silent men and women, each one brooding in seclusion over the day's public issues, should that time ever arrive then we, as a people are doomed.

(Continued on Page Two)

STRANGE CHRISTMAS

By THOMAS MULLIGAN

The lonely road wound like a silver ribbon through the dark forest: the moonlight glittering coldly on the freshly fallen snow cloaking its weary miles. In the midst of this desolate region, lost in the shadows of the gaunt trees towering above it, a car stood deserted by the side of the road. Very faintly, far-off in the distance, the pealing of church bells could be heard, greeting the starry dome of Christmas night.

A shadow moved across the snow, deep in the cathedral-like aisles of the forest. As it stood for a moment in the light of the moon, it resolved into the figure of a young man in uniform; but vanished just as suddenly into the shapeless darkness of the night. A faint light glimmered feebly through the trees, and it was in this direction the figure wended its way.

The shadows on the snow lie deep save where the silver moonbeams sleep.

And with the stars of Christmas eve
A tressled bower of black they weave;
Their dead blue light a ghastly white
Against the shadows of the night.

The rustling twigs began to whisper tales
Of dwellers in the forest long ago,
Who roamed and wandered through these sylvan dales
And vanished with the melting of the snow;
How oft, on Christmas night, these beings flitted
Like tongues of flame, beneath the withered oak;
And how, the yule-logs bringing,
They filled the vales with singing,
The simple carols of the forest folk;
And tho' they are no longer

Yet their presence e'er is stronger,
And still their holy anthems may be heard
Though mortal voices utter not a word.

The air is crisp and cool, and far away
Across the breathing quiet of the dark,
Through the trees, three windows seem to glimmer
Bright at first, then softly growing dimmer;
Will o' the wisp, the angels' gift to mark
The Traveller's path, lest from it he should stray.
It finally fades, as tho' in weariness;
And all is silver snow, and eeriness.

The figure paused, when the light flickered and disappeared amongst the trees; but brief patches of moonlight seemed to show a path for him through the thick woods, and soon he emerged into a little hollow, right in the midst of the forest. A stagnant moat surrounded a crumbling and ancient manor-house; around which the mists curling up from the moat seemed like evil spirits striving to choke the old manor from the cool, pure crisp air of Christmas night. The place was oppressively still and quiet; and only the gray mists rising from the weed-choked waters moved. But a cheery light gleamed through the windows of the manor, and towards them the Traveller made his way.

The forest looms around; its shadows swallow
The feeble moonbeams struggling to break
Through Stygian darkness to a little hollow,
That the poor Wanderer their light might follow
The ghostly trail that their faint light would make.

The manor's fallen turrets loom
Desolate, against the moon;
The stagnant waters' gurgling breath
Grew foetid with the stench of death.
As a dank mist rises and billows
From rotten reeds and dying willows
And icy fungi and dead moss;
—And having risen, spreads across
The manor, shielding from the night
Except at times, the warm lamp-light
That from three lead-paned windows glow
Soft and red, against the snow;
And strives to hide—as tho' the dead
Or demons haunted it instead—
(Continued on Page Four)

FAUX
PAS

The Chief Priest, Scribes and Pharisees,
Of our somewhat sacred institution,
The Daily, decided once upon a time
To foregather in that masculine sanctum
Sanctorum, the Union,
For the purpose of, I believe,
A slight binge.

A lowly scribe and moreover a female
Arrived somewhat late,
And stealthily made my way to the Ballroom
Expecting fun and festivity
And scenes reminiscent
Of the Orange Peel Tavern.
Not so!

The room was dark
But dimly filled with Creatures
Contentedly contemplating
A moving picture of a ski-meet.
I entered and sought a seat
And for some time,
Oblivious to all about me,
Gazed rapturously.
The picture ended, the lights went on
And I turned casually around
In search of friends.

To my great dismay I noticed
That the female sex, in any shape or form
Was conspicuous, to say the least
By its absence.

I gulped, and clutched my neighbor.
"Is this," I said hopefully,
"The Daily Party?"
"No, Madam," said my neighbour coldly
And with a hint of suspicion in his voice
"This is a meeting of the Men's Camera Club—
For Men!"
Honest to Pete
I beat
A hasty retreat.

—BUNTY THOMAS

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IN CHARGE OF THIS ISSUE

SANTA CLAUS

Montreal, Friday, December 20, 1940
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A Merry Christmas

A Merry Christmas? No, that question mark is not a misprint. It was deliberate, and expresses we think the thoughts of a good many people as the Yuletide season rolls around, the first really wartime Christmas most of us remember.

Ought this Christmas to be a merry one, we are asking ourselves. On three continents war will be raging on Christmas Day—the day of peace. Men will be struggling to kill each other, with powerful juggernauts on the day whose message is good will to men. While all the world is full of such misery and suffering ought we, here, far from the roar of guns and the crashing of bombs to wish each other a merry Christmas in a manner little different from that of previous years?

Surely no individual, no matter how hardened by the horrors of war can remain unaffected by the message of Christmas. Is it so illogical that, in the midst of "blood and toil, tears and sweat," we can pause to drink in a portion of the spirit of peace given to us by the Child of Bethlehem.

Christmas and all that it has stood for has survived world war, world revolution. While changing in externals as all things do through the course of centuries, the spirit of the Christmas story has remained essentially the same throughout these long centuries. And its message is as vital for us today, living under the shadow of war, as it was at any time during the past 20 centuries.

Can anyone fairly chastise us for living in another world during the brief Christmas season, the world of our hopes and dreams, the world many of us feel we are fighting for, and which we pray may some day be the abode of all humanity?

For the true Christmas spirit, strip of all the man-made legends and quaint fantasies offers us in dark days, a hope, a light, a goal towards which we can all chart our course.

For 2000 years the bells have tolled the chimes of peace and good will to men. Let us listen this Christmas, December 1940, and live if only briefly in the greatest of all our desires.

Toil without a purpose is labour wasted. To fight without ideals is to fight in vain. Perhaps we shall achieve from this happy season a new driving spirit in our onslaught against the forces of evil.

Merry Christmas, McGill!

Satirica

Graduate

Wisdom
Missed him;
Knowledge,
He got at college.

Dives

Some filthy lucre
May be won at poker or euchre,
But the large amount
Stay where neither chance nor brain counts.

Yoohooditties

By Yehudy

Mr. Santa Claus,
Simpson's Window,
Corner St. Catherine and Mansfield Streets,
City.

Dear Mr. Claus,
Through the medium of this letter, I would like to forward to you my Christmas list. You may be surprised that a man of my age should believe in your fictitious existence so firmly as to send you a letter, but—what the heck?—I'm not going to pay for all the presents I am so generously ordering and you won't really have to lug them anywhere, so why not fill in some space in the DAILY? O.K.? Good. Let's pretend, then...

In childish egoism, I'll start with myself. You'll find my demands very modest, but I am at heart a modest person. (Who'd 'a think it?) This is all I want:

- 1) A copy of the current best seller, "Ali Plumber and the 40 Beers."
- 2) One Vargo Girl, wrapped in cellophane.
- 3) One dozen (censored).
- 4) Copy of "The Red Martlet," to encourage my capitalistic Christmas squanderings.

You may find some difficulty in delivering the above to my Christmas Tree which will be planted in New York City, but maybe you could ask Superman to co-operate in this matter.

Next to myself in importance on my list are my esteemed professors. To them it might be inappropriate to give material gifts. I might well, then, ask you to grant them health, peace of mind, happiness perennial, and anything their deserving hearts may desire. (Just between you and me, Mr. Claus, they're going to correct my exams during the vacation.) And it would not be pointless in this respect to give Mrs. Professor a reliable cook-book.

For some of my honorable colleagues I have fitting gifts. Those of them who have not been included in this list should find my generosity in that very exclusion:

E.G.: A pair of scissors. (No paste.)
Mumbling Minnie: Copy of "How to Win Friends and Influence People."

draw: Daily Trouble.
mulligan: Mr. King.
Pix: Nix.
pope: An icebox.

Yehudy: A gag (!)
My list would be tactlessly incomplete if it did not include gifts for the McGill student body at large. Never let that be said of me. I give, then, to the:

Engineers: A co-ed. (A special yearly subscription to "Good Housekeeping" is given to the Architects.)

R.V.Cites: A telephone in their Arts Building common-room. (A time limit on each call would render its harmonious function possible.)

Theologs: A banquet similar to that of Company C.

Lawyers: Absolutely nothing. (I wonder if that gives grounds for suit against me.)

Artsmen: The have Yehudy.
Well, if you've got to go, you've got to go, and my train will not wait. Anyhow, I've completed my list. It's up to you, now, Mr. Claus, not to deliver.

Oh, yes. One more thing. If it is not asking too much, would you please bring me a reader?—and HANDLE WITH CARE!

Thanking you in advance for your very good offices in this matter, I remain,
Truly yours,
Who S. Yehudy.

P.S. Merry Yoo-hoo and Happy Ditties, Everybody!

ODD VERSE

"Poem About Winter" or "Isn't Summer Wonderful"

The poet Kingsley wrote happily, "Jovial wind of winter, turn us out to play!"
What a peculiar thing to say!
How could anyone receive the impression that Winter is jovial?

I think it is definitely "Is-there-room-for-one-more-by-the-stove-al." Longfellow thought so too, because he wrote—
Quote:

"O the long and dreary Winter!
O the cold and cruel Winter!
Ever thicker, thicker, thicker—"

There you have it, straight from the shoulder and right from the tucker.
For dozens of vehement reasons
Winter is the least lovable of all the seasons.

Spring smells nice. There is a thrill in the air. But has Winter a charming fragrance all its own? Certainly not, and if it did, who would care,
Or even know?

All the perfumes of Arabia would be a distinct flop to a nose that is busy breathing breath-you-can-see at ten degrees below.

Summer feels nice. It has balmy breezes and lovely warm sun that toasts you to a stylish shade of tan.

Whereas Winter feels perfectly awful—particularly on the knees if you're a woman, and the ears if you're a man.

And when you fall on it, Winter feels anything but nice.

Because wherever it isn't snow it is ice.

Autumn looks nice. All red and gold and russet.

But Winter looks nice only in the uninhabited mountains where there are no snow-ploughs to muck it.

Those who write hearty little verses about snow and all its joys,
Have apparently never had it hurled at them with deadly accuracy by hordes of little boys.

When a small youth makes a snowball, nothing in the world can persuade him not to throw it.

You can apply volumes and volumes of child psychology and he will most offensively "Ho! Ho!" it.

You can snarl through your teeth and do your impersonation of Frankenstein, or pat him on the head and offer him a cigar.

And say, "My, what a deLIGHTful little boy you are!"

But you might just as well try to whip up a friendship with the Taj Mahal.

Because a small boy with a snowball is the original Immovable Object, and he is going to throw his snowball at you as soon as you are the right distance away, and that is all.

At this point I might make a terse remark or two about Engineers in snowball weather. But I'm afraid if I once got started I might go on forever, so let's just ignore the painful subject altogether.

Worse than anything, OVERSHOES are entirely Winter's invention.

And oh, how I wish there was a Society for their Prevention!

I do not like overshoes, because when you politely ask people "Shall I take them off in the hall?"

They always pretend to be terribly surprised and then say indulgently, "Why, yes, if you would LIKE to!" and suggest kindly, "Just lean against the wall!"

(Continued on Page Three)

Conversation Piece

By Irving Layton

(Continued from Page One)

The lessons of the past as well as the recent present are as plain as a pumpkin. For example, look at the ancient Greeks. A race of talkers, if ever there was one; in love with human speech, doting on the subtler kinds of oral sound. Never as in that fair time, have the schools of rhetoric commanded such a respectful admiration. Think of the passionate discussions that the youthful Socrates engaged in and the elder one aroused. The daring speculations of Plato, Aristotle's Lyceum. And the young men who flocked around them eager to hear what they had to say concerning justice, courage, temperance and the other virtues. Talk? Why, Greek philosophy is nothing else but a luminously recorded gabfest.

Everyone recalls, especially today, the Pass of Thermopylae and Salamis. Who but a people, proud in the free and dexterous use of their tongues could have withstood so magnificently the swarming—but ingloriously mute—Persians? Those famous engagements not only secured the triumph of Western civilization but, what is perhaps the same thing, demonstrated for all time that that nation fights best that talks best.

Recently, many books have appeared purporting to explain why France collapsed after only a few weeks of actual warfare. Some ingenious authors would have us believe that the country was badly prepared. Others blame the Communists. Still others think that the Front Populaire in trying to improve the living conditions of the people, sapped their morale with the added ounce of butter and the extra slice of bread. It appears the Frenchman could not withstand their demoralizing influence; he became soft and flabby and forgot the sterner virtues of his forefathers.

In the absence of real proof, I suppose one theory is as good as another. Nevertheless, it has struck me forcibly that these writers always fail to mention one important psychological fact. And that is that the French are a race of unregenerate babblers. They are as much in love with the pleasures of the tongue as the Germans are said to be with the pleasures of the belly. On any fair afternoon, it was a common sight to see ecstatic Frenchmen drooling away into each other's faces. There was France in all her glory.

Hence, when Premier Daladier, with incredible stupidity decided to rule by decree and began the war by abolishing freedom of speech and assembly, he settled the fate of France. A paralyzing chill descended upon all classes. From the highest to the lowest, generals, captains, the ordinary poilu, all were seized with an accountable sense of depression. With what bitterness and shame they must have recollected the glorious France of '89 when everyone, even the humblest, permitted himself a slobbering, a wild, uncontrollable paroxysm of verbosity. Alas, those indeed were the enviable days, when to the immortal glory of their country, Frenchmen jabbered, chattered, prated, drivelled, ranted and gibbled about Liberty, Equality and Fraternity. On the streets and in the clubrooms of Paris, Marseilles, Lyons, the nation to a man was

simply gripped by a tremendous passion for talking, talking, talking. So powerful was the energy thus unloosed that it planted the victorious tricolor in almost every capital of Europe.

Therefore, they who blame the humiliating collapse of France upon diverse treacheries are needlessly going far afield. There was only one treachery committed against the people of France. A nation of brilliant conversationalists, fond of animated talk, they were denied the natural outlet for their talent. They were gagged by their own leaders and they suffocated. France fell because she could not speak.

There is one other erroneous theory that I should like to explode. Even in educated circles you will hear it said that Czarist Russia dissolved because of corruption in high places, bureaucratic inefficiency and the intolerable economic conditions produced by war. Nothing could be further from the truth. All these so-called reasons are merely superficial, after-the-fact theorizing. The intelligent person will do well to be on his guard against such absurd, demagogic phrasemongering.

The true reason for the breakdown of the Russian Empire must be sought for elsewhere. The Russians are inveterate tea-drinkers. Everyone knows that. But does everyone deduce the logical corollary from that fact? Namely that a tea-drinking people will also be a loquacious one, enamored of verbose discussion and argument. Recall Dostolevski and his pale, but disputatious, heroes. They went on gabbling endlessly; they questioned every issue under the sun without ever settling anything. Indeed, a conclusion was considered in decidedly bad taste.

Now there I assert, you have the material for a first rate revolution. After all, who were the leaders of the October Revolution, Lenin, Trotsky et al, but the most brilliant talkers in that talk-loving land? Czar Nicholas knew only too well their great conversational gifts. That's why he insisted upon keeping them safely under lock and key or packed them off to the frozen wastes of Siberia. Even so he could not quench or destroy their passionate desire to talk. And snatches of their conversation were picked up and passed around from samovar to samovar. There, the words of the imprisoned conversationalists became flesh. As the samovar simmered, so did the people.

Lenin, desperate for want of someone to talk to, wrote a monologue. He called it "State and Revolution." Overnight it became a best seller with momentous consequences for his country.

Today, the most encouraging fact is the manner with which the English people are defending their ancient prerogative of garrulity. For that is what freedom of speech ultimately means. It guarantees a man the right to be as garrulous as he pleases. Some people have prized its joys so highly that they have written this right into their constitutions.

Hence, how inspiring was the reaction of the English people to their Minister's attempt to curb their

(Continued on Page Four)

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DESERT CHRISTMAS

By ROBERT A. SPENCER

(Continued from Page Two)

plainly written on the envelope. Miss June Campbell—Carleton Rd., Hampstead. . . . Well, supposing it is. . . . How? How can it be?

It was some moments before he had courage to tell himself the truth. Slowly he opened the letter. Yes there it was. . . . Dearest June. . . . I love you so. . . . so long. . . . we can get married then. . . .

So that was it. So that was why she had said no, why on the platform she had said it would be better to forget it all, why all his letters had gone unanswered. Slowly he folded up the letter, placed it in the envelope, sealed it. With a sigh he got up, tossed it into the mail basket.

He walked slowly over toward the door. The orderly was bent over a table in the next room. He came back and stood near the desk and once again picked up the letter. "Miss June Campbell. . . ."

And Dick Reid, of all people. A raw recruit who had joined the regiment a few months ago. Savagely Sutherland cursed the fate that had brought them together, he the platoon commander, Reid the raw private. Bitterly he resented Reid's presence, almost as much as he resented his affair with June. . . .

"Beg pardon, sir, but it's eight o'clock." It was the orderly who had entered silently.

"All right, Johnson, I'm going now." He put on his greatcoat, for the desert nights are cold, and without another word was gone.

After leaving the Company headquarters, Sutherland went out to look over the ground where the raid was to take place. The British front lines were nearly three miles in advance of which his platoon was billeted. It was, he forced himself grudgingly to admit, an ideal night for the job. Cool, and dark. The moon was already low, and within an hour would have disappeared altogether. At last he reached the forward positions, explained his mission and was guided safely through. From this distance, the Italian stronghold took on a ghostly shape against the undulating sands of the desert. Eight hundred yards. . . .

Cautiously he started out to get a closer view. The ground was a little higher on his left. He would move up there. Crouching low to the ground he moved cautiously, flattening himself to the sand every few moments to watch and listen, praying all the time that he would not be seen, or that someone from his own lines would not open fire. "Like some. . . . to think this is a fine time to win a V.C." he muttered.

Alone in the darkness he struggled on, moving always closer to the Italian fortification. Suddenly as he peered over a bank of sand he started as a huge black shape loomed up. As he stared at it, it grew and took shape. A tank, stopped cold by the Italian guns. There was another, off to the left. This then was the scene of this afternoon's battle. He listened carefully, fearing there might be someone out to investigate the tanks. There was no sound, only stillness, eternal quiet. But he must move on, time was running short. He ran a short distance then dropped, and crawled carefully up another bank. Here he could see, but 200 yards away, the Italian fortifications. They were located in an oasis, the palm trees standing out sharply against the desert sands. There was nothing to be seen, nothing to be heard. For twenty minutes he lay there studying the ground, trying to wrest from the darkness its carefully hidden secrets.

At last, he turned back.

Sutherland returned to the rendezvous just behind the forward lines where the sergeant was to have the platoon all in readiness. In the eerie darkness he moved up and down the lines of men, checking weapons, ammunition, gasmasks, field dressings, and searching them for papers which might prove valuable to the enemy if captured. In front of Dick Reid he halted, and eyed him from head to foot. Did he know? Had he told him? He wondered. Somehow this boy looked out of place here on the battlefield. He was so young. Nice looking, Sutherland thought. And yet he hated him. Why not? Who wouldn't?

"Reid."

"Sir."

"You'll act as runner for me tonight." ("I'll make the beggar work.")

The patrol moved out over the path traced by Sutherland, through the forward lines, cautiously, slowly, crouching low and taking advantage of every rise and depression in the ground. After a few hundred yards they halted, and Sutherland, taking Reid with him moved ahead. Odd, he thought. Here was Reid and himself together in the midst of a

vast wilderness. Fate does play queer tricks. He looked at him in the darkness but could not even see the expression on his face. They crawled ahead some distance and then Reid was sent back to lead the platoon up. Again and again this performance was repeated. They were getting close to the Italian fortifications. Once a man sneezed. Fearfully they crouched even closer to the ground, praying they had not been heard. They listened intently, but there was no sound.

On his next move forward, Sutherland passed the two disabled tanks. He crawled ahead and halted on the ridge just beyond. After what seemed an interminable length of time the platoon moved up. Breathing a command into the ear of one of his corporals he told him to move to a position on the right and crawl up another 50 yards. After waiting ten minutes for them to get away, he led another section ahead, crawling this time all the way. The oasis by now looked so close he could almost touch it. Finding a convenient depression, he and the ten men with him sank to the ground, hardly daring to breathe.

Sutherland carefully opened his watch. Its luminous dial showed 1.20. He glanced around. In 20 minutes the British artillery would suddenly open fire on an Italian post a thousand yards to the right to distract the attention of the Italian machine guns. He would then lead the men up, carefully, making a final dash to wipe out the post.

He glanced around. The corporal was sitting, gazing out across the desert; Reid was poking at the sand with his rifle; the rest of the section were spread out, lying on the sand. A few yards to his right, the light machine gunner had the gun set up in position, and ever watchful was ready for any emergency.

Sutherland's eyes returned to Reid, and a variety of feelings swept through his mind. Pity and scorn, for he seemed so weak, so out of place; hatred for the interference in his own love affairs; wonder he wondered what thoughts were passing through his brain. . . . Did he know, had he told him, had he guessed; envy. . . . yes. . . . how he envied him, so safe, so sure in his love. This was the second Christmas Sutherland would spend in the desert, and he hated it, hated the war, himself and everything connected with it. Mentally he could not help contrasting his position with Reid's. Christmas was but a week away, and what a different way each would spend the day. He thought of June, of his endless pleadings, his entreaties, his high hopes that were crushed. He looked at Reid with hate and pity, and envy and scorn, and admiration.

And then his eyes wandered across the desert to the Italian stronghold, and he thought of the job ahead. "A fifty to one chance we don't come out alive," he muttered. Once again his eyes turned to Reid and he thought of June—in a week she would arrive in Egypt—damned hard on her. For one long moment he looked, and then rousing himself he looked at his watch, and saw that the moments had sped quickly by.

1.37. . . . He turned around and struggled to his knees. The men did not have to be told. Each took a firmer grip on his rifle, and crouched like animals poised for the kill. All around was darkness, quiet.

With agonizing slowness the minutes ticked by. Sutherland held his watch in one hand, felt for his revolver with the other, and grasped the butt, his finger poised on the trigger.

1.39 and still the seconds ticked by. Sutherland glanced to the right where the artillery would open fire. . . . then. . . . 1.40.

"Ready boys" in a whisper that was swallowed up in the darkness. Still no sign from right. . . . "Damn fools forgot to synchronize their watches" but even as he thought this the barrage on the right opened up.

"Steady now. . . . off we go." Under cover of the noise of the exploding shells they started to crawl forward. Distinct sounds of action could be heard from the Italian post. . . . men running. . . . the clatter of equipment. . . . muffled orders. Steadily they moved forward. The barrage would last for only a few minutes, they must be swift.

150 yards to go. . . . 125. . . . 100 steady. . . . keep low. . . . 75. . . . Then just as they were fifty yards from the fortifications, a flare went off from the Italian position, revealing to the Italians thirty men crawling across the sand. To Sutherland it showed the Italian guns, trained to the right, but as he watched he knew they were seen. . . . the guns were firing. . . . were swinging directly towards them. In a flash he jumped to his feet. . . . roared "On-charge." And as he jumped he collided with Reid and saw his boyish face, pale and bewildered, look-

ing strangely like his own younger brother in the light of the flare. The guns were still swinging towards them—were right ahead. The hail of lead had started.

Private Richard Reid in battle for the first time, frightened beyond speech as he faced the rat-tat-tat of the machine gun dimly heard in an unconscious way the cry of his officer, standing beside him with his revolver waving over his head and frantically wondering what his trainers had told him to do in such a circumstance. Dazed, frightened he clutched his rifle and staggered on, until all the world seemed to tumble on the back of his head and he went down.

It was several hours later after supporting troops had occupied the position formerly held by the Italians, that Corporal Norman Stanton rallied his seven men around them, all that was left of No. 17 platoon, to march them back to their billets. On the way out they passed the spots where their comrades had fallen. In one place they found Private Richard Reid, lying face down in a hollow in the sand, the back of his head badly swollen as from a blow from a revolver, unconscious, but with no other sign of wounds.

Stanton turned Reid over, felt his pulse and examined him for wounds.

"He's all right—nothing but the bang on the head."

"Funny, sir, it looks as if someone dropped him in the right place, in a nice spot, sheltered from the machine gun fire."

A few yards farther on they found Lieutenant Sutherland, his body riddled with bullets, even in death clutching his revolver. The blood stained sand and the marks of a man crawling told the story of how he had been shot down, had gamely got up and struggled on, down again, and then up until he went down for the last time.

ODD VERSE

(Continued from Page Two)

And then your shoe Comes off too.

And when you have to put them on again they persist in looking exactly like everyone else's do;

And when you finally find your own, you have just commenced your trouble, Because overshoes are never left and right, but always the same foot, DOUBLE.

I mean, in appearance, they are inscrutably similar,

And what could possibly be Gott in Himmeler? The only way to tell them apart is to put them both on, and if your feet sort of curve outwards, you know they are on wrong. But if you don't wear overshoes your feet soon reach a state where you think you have hundreds and hundreds of toes, or else none at all, which is something few people can endure for long.

And that is why so many choose To clump about in overshoes.

Oh, when I think of the thing called Winter, My heart could not possibly be flinter.

And yet, in Winter, I am consistently cheerful, and never wait about languishing for the purple seas or beseeching people to ship me somewhere east of the Isthmus.

Because Winter has ONE feature that makes it the cream in my coffee, and the lrum in my toothpaste, and the Vitamins in my breakfast food—Winter (GOOD old Winter!) has CHRISTMAS!

—Isobel Kneeland.

THEME AND VARIATIONS

By ROBERT G. SIMPSON

(Continued from Page One)

in the library. She stood with her back to the fire-place and watched him as he entered the room. The light behind her threw an aura of brilliance around her and long shadows down the soft folds of her gown.

"You hadn't forgotten, darling, that we had an engagement with Lucien at six o'clock, had you?" Carol stood before him, her hands on her hips and her head and shoulders thrown slightly back.

Tony eyed her for a moment, and hated and loved her. She was fighting unfairly, taking advantage of his powerlessness and his distaste for physical force. He felt the hot blood surge through his swollen veins, but he knew not the passion causing it. He was cognizant only of her loveliness and his inability to know her.

"I'm sorry," he said, "but I couldn't get away any sooner."

"I suppose I'm not as important to you as Mr. Bennet."

"Don't be silly, Carol." Her presence was heavy upon him, heavy and delightful. He could smell the faint aroma of her perfume as his senses drank in her nearness. This was his woman, his and yet not his, something apart.

"Carol, do we have to go out? Couldn't we stay alone, together tonight? We haven't been by ourselves in weeks."

"But, Tony, absolutely everybody will be there. It's awfully important, and I'm sure we'll have a really grand time. Hurry up and dress, darling, it's getting on."

Tony knew he was defenceless. He could only use the strength of his arms, but society denied him that. The shimmering white loveliness of this woman over-shadowed him, over-powered him, destroyed, for the moment, the being within him.

"All right," he said. "All right."

Old Joe arrived home with his arms full. He was laden with bundles, some wrapped in the brown paper of the butcher shop, and some in the more cheerful paper of the confectioners, and on top of them all was his frizzled, grinning face, red and bright like a school-boy's, anticipating his welcome.

And he wasn't disappointed. The missus sprang from her knitting in a rickety rocking-chair and ran to meet him. And at her exclamation three touselled youngsters burst into the room from another little room behind. In an instant they were all about his legs, screaming and pushing, anxious to get a peek at the good things in store. So he dumped the parcels on the well-worn table and they all set to, untying the string and unwrapping the paper, and shouting with mounting delight as each new luxury came before their eyes. There was the roast of beef, all ready for the oven on Christmas Day, and potatoes, turnips, apples and figs, and all such delicacies as had never been known before. Oh, this was a Christmas Eve indeed! The children were dancing around the table waving the coloured paper in the air. The missus was bustling about putting things where they would keep, and Joe, the big frizzled grin still on his face, stood in the corner watching it all, content that this year had brought some happiness.

Later, when the children were asleep in bed, exhausted from the excitement of the evening, he placed three little packages in the corner beside the stove.

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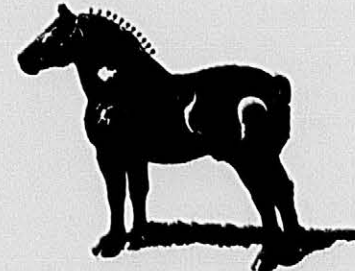
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Jo's Busy Week-end

By Dorothy Taylor-Stoll

(Continued from Page One)

the stone wall between them.

"Think you're going to like it here? This is your first week-end isn't it?"

"Uhm! Wonderful. Lake's grand. Jerry laughed aloud. . . . The little miss sure seemed fond of water.

Jo looked up at him and stopped dropping peanuts into the cracks along the wall, to explain laconically.

"Saw the cutest chipmunk a while back. Got to make him come back."

Jerry was as silent as the grave, and watched the raindrops trickling down her smooth cheeks and tiny pointed chin. He thought her mouth looked very red against her brown skin, and waited for her to smile.

A rumble of thunder startled him into action.

"Storm's coming up. I'd better get these parcels up to the house before they're soaked, I guess. They're some of mother's precious knick-knacks for the cottage. We're fixing up this one now that the red one's rented. May as well take advantage of the long week-end, eh?"

"Good idea," echoed Jo, and looking at the lean young strength of him, decided to do the same thing.

"Bye for now. Duty calls. Gathering up his baggage he disappeared through the trees.

"Bye," . . . mused Jo, curling and uncurling her toes in the grass, and waiting for the sound of a banging door. It came, like the last chord of a pretty melody, and she gave a little sigh of contentment as she tripped back into the cottage. He was nice!

"Fools rush in. . . . where wise men never go. . . ." boomed a voice through the trees, and Jo stirred sleepily in her bed. It was Saturday morning and the country air smelled divine. The sound of hammering crashed into her ears and the voice persisted "But wise men never fall in love. . . . So how are they. . . . But Jo was wide awake. It wasn't long before she was out. The grass was still soggy, so she took a book and sat in the swing. She could hear scuffling and banging through the trees ahead, and wondered where Jerry was and what he was doing. Over and over she read and reread the same page. It didn't make sense. Where was he?

Jerry, with a row of nails between his white teeth, measured and hammered the roof slats carefully. When his mouth was empty he began to sing to take away the biting taste of iron in his throat. He had no qualms about singing loudly and without restraint.

"That's that. Now for the chimney!" Talking aloud to himself he

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STRANGE CHRISTMAS

By THOMAS MULLIGAN

(Continued from Page One)

The manor; and as tho' to cleave
A Christian home from Christmas eve.

As through the swirling mists the pale glints stream,
The Wanderer again beholds their gleam:
—Will-o'-the-wisp, a dancing, guiding spirit—
And struggles onwards towards the welcoming light.

Yet still the cold moon gleamed upon the roof
Above the gray mists struggling below;
—As though its shimmering whiteness offered proof
By rising o'er the foul vapours that grow
And with their clutching tendrils, creeping flow:
—Proof that alone in that ungodly place
They yet remain a symbol of God's grace.
Below the eaves sagged warped and mouldy casements,
Their shutters sadly needing new replacements:
A house of Usher, lonely there it stood,
—There in that little hollow in the wood;
And lonelier still, fighting the mists that choke
Its twisted limbs, there stands an ancient oak
Centuries old; in clear and stormy weather
It and the manor had grown old together.

The old oak beams and red brick walls
Had fallen also to decay;
Whose mildewed, yet majestic, halls
Resounded once with laughter gay.
The nearby shepherds knew them not;
It seemed a house that time forgot.

The Traveller shuddered once, and turned his head
To look behind, and then plods on before.
He seemed to sense a nameless haunting dread
As though voices were speaking from the dead,
And suddenly the voices were no more.

The Traveller looked through the windows, and beheld a huge
Christmas dinner spread on the table before his eyes. The room was
gaily decked with holly and mistletoe; a fire burned merrily in the grate,
and he could see the steam rise from the roast turkey, and the blue
flames enveloping the Christmas pudding. Yet only three places were
set at the table, to partake of such a sumptuous feast. Just as he was
about to run away from the weird place, a woman's voice called on him
to enter; addressing him as "her son". Glad to get out of the cold chill
of the mist and the night, the soldier wonderingly entered the Manor,
and joined the strange little old lady who had asked him in, in Christmas
dinner. Yet even more strange, was the way the old lady kept on
addressing him as "her son", during the meal.

The frost shines on the window panes,
Its alabaster leaves and veins
Hiding from the mists of night
The chamber, with a frieze of white.
The Wanderer, pausing at the door
Now turns his eyes to gaze some more
Through the frost-etched squares of glass,
And view what must before him pass.
What secret in that chamber lies
That fills with wonderment his eyes.

A sumptuous feast lay spread before him there:
A Christmas dinner, such as ne'er before
A genii, in answer to a prayer,
Could e'er have conjured forth; such gorgeous fare,
That mortal men could ne'er have wished for more.
The turkey lay in sturnine repose,
Steeped in gravy, stuffing and green mint;
The pudding, round which crackling blue flames rose
Casting on green-leaved holly their pale glint—
Lay steaming spiced and rotund, on the table;
—No goodlier feast is told in any fable.
Three seats awaited each their absent guest;
The Traveller wondered as he closely pressed
His frozen face against the window-pane,
Then turned into the swirling mist again.
But e'er the night the traveller had won,
A woman's voice cried "Enter, thou my son!"
The little old lady slowly smiled, and passed
A plate of Christmas turkey to her guest;
Luscious and appetizing was its smell.
'Twas roasted crisp and golden brown as well,
The delicacies were the very best
That e'er broke a hungry stranger's fast.

The soldier happened to look up into the big crystal mirror over-
looking the table. The old lady was talking to him: her silver hair
framed by a huge pair of candlesticks, whose smoke rose slowly to the
ceiling in lazy curls. But, as he looked in the mirror, he saw there was
no one sitting in her chair. His startled gaze moved away from the
mirror, and suddenly rested on a picture just beneath it on the mantel
piece. The picture was of a young man about his own age, dressed in
the uniform of the last war; and, as he looked closer at it, he suddenly
realized the portrait was the picture of himself. Frightened, the soldier
turned around to face the little old lady, but the apparition had vanished.
But still he heard her voice, speaking to him from the whispering
shadows of the walls.

He saw her tiny face and silver hair
Between two heavy silver candlesticks,
Looking intently at him, sitting there;
He saw the fire glow ruddily on the bricks
Above the hearth, and looking up from that
He gazed into the mirror on the wall;
And suddenly he gasped in terror
For there was no one in the mirror!
—An empty chair could only tell
Where the old lady once had sat.
"What ails thee? Is thy hour come?"
Her voice asked, "What is wrong, my son?"

The candles smoked, and sent their wreaths
—Like demons dried in heathen faiths—
In curling wisps up to the ceiling;
But still the mirror, there revealing
No one seated in the chair
Where sat the lady, silver hair
Witch or woman both concealing,
And still her silent presence feeling.

Another picture met the traveller's stare,
A boy in uniform, with wavy hair;
Handsome and resolute, and bold of eye.
The Traveller gazed, and looking, marvelled, "Why
That boy that looks down from the mantel-shelf
Is the clear living image of myself!"

"For thirty years the sands of time have run
Before the spirits let you go, my son;
—Before the world of shadows set you free,
That you might spend this Christmas-tide with me".
The traveller turned, his face now pale and wan
With fear, but lo! the ghost had gone.

The soldier wandered out into the hall in search of the old lady,
but no one was in sight. Just as he was about to go back to the room,
he felt a gun pressed into his ribs from behind, and the shaky voice of
an old man bade him raise his hands. Obedient, but perplexed, the
soldier did so. The captor asked his prisoner in a quavering voice what
he was doing, prowling around his house at this time of the night. The

'B' PUCKSTERS WALLOP 'F'

Winners Pile Up
Five-goal Lead

Farmer, Crutchfield, Mac-
Donald, Star for Winners
—Young for Losers

The role of Santa Claus for
"B" Company's victorious hock-
key team was ably filled at yes-
terday's M.R.T.B. scheduled
feature by MacDonald, Crutch-
field, and Farmer who alternat-
ely took the part by account-
ing for most of the action and
all of the tallies. "F" Company
came out on the short end of
the scoring, getting one pointer
to their opponents' six. The ad-
vantage of the victors lay in
their superior passing and solid
defence, whereas the losers' weakness appeared to be their inability to keep their positions.

Bud Farmer was the high scorer
of the tilt, slipping three counters
through the pipes and assisting in
the disposal of two more. Bruce
Crutchfield tagged two and as
many assists while Bill MacDonald's
contribution was one goal and a
trio of helpers. These three puck-
sters formed one of the forward
line-ups on the "B" team.

FIRST PERIOD
Rough and fast play started right
with the opening whistle, two goals
being scored in the first five min-
utes. MacDonald did a solo for the
first point at the three minute
mark with Bud Farmer denting the
mesh two minutes later to give "B"
an early lead of two points. From
the start most of the play centred
around Duncan in the "F" Company
nets but this situation was eased
somewhat towards the close of the
period when the "B"s goaler, Fyfe
came in for a little exercise.

SECOND PERIOD
"B"s chief error in sending all
men up the ice on the attack, leav-
ing a very weak defence was most
noticeable in this period. An "F"
charge up the ice ending in a close
miss by Ritchie backfired when the
"flash" line of Mud, Bill, and Bruce
swept down the ice before the "F"
men could get back to position and
Farmer became instrumental in il-
luminating the red light behind
Duncan on assists from his two con-
freres. "F" got their one and only
score in this period with Young
making the pass to Charter for the
marker at the eight minute mark.
Soon after Crutchfield made it four
for "B" on an assist from Farmer.

THIRD PERIOD
After three minutes of see-saw
play "B" started to click again and
Crutchfield slapped in another with
assists from the other two pucksters
to make it 5-1. Chalmers, who was
missing from the team line-up due
to the old Demon Flu, was severely
missed in the defence particularly
at this point as the forwards were
forced to help in the defence. With
five minutes to play Farmer made
it a three goal total for himself
when MacDonald cleared from one
of "F"s all too frequent all-team
sallies up the ice and slipped the
disk to Farmer.

soldier explained that, stranded on the lonely road by a stalled motor,
he had seen the lights of the Manor through the trees of the forest, and
had arrived there seeking shelter. An old lady had asked him to join
her in at dinner, but she had suddenly disappeared from the room. And
she had kept on calling him "her son". "But there are no lights in the
dining room", the old man's voice whispered, "and my wife and son
have been dead these thirty years. Since their death, no human foot
has trod within that room; for it was there she died, when the terrible
message of our son's death reached us.
For thirty years no soul had been
inside that room, or e'er had seen
The musty mirror on the wall,
Or seen the crumbling plaster fall
Down where the iron dogs' reddish rust
Mingled with a mead of dust!
And cobwebs wove their silken strands
—Soft as the sun in Eastern lands—
From chair to cloth, and cloth to door
And from the mantel to the floor,
Entwining the picture on the shelf,
—The living image of himself.

The old man's words confirmed his fears;
"My wife's been dead for thirty years,
Robber, now I know you lie!"
The Traveller turned, and met his eye;
The old man gave a piteous cry,
And stumbled back, and dropped his gun,
And croaked two words, "My son, my son!"
Backward fell his hoary head
And forward fell the old man,—dead.

And forth into the bitter cold the frightened Traveller fled,
The cold gray mists had ceased to wreath and wind
Their stagnant tendrils and their choking breath;
It seemed as tho' a greater, loftier Mind
Had taken from the place the curse of death,
Far in the distance, o'er the fields of white
The tolling of the bells that Christmas night
Bore in their wild chiming a tune begun
First in low and muffled peals,
Rising till all heaven reels
And the very welkin wheels
And seems to shriek those words, "My son, my son",
And as the Traveller turned his gaze on high
A bright new star appeared there in the sky,

Wanted—One
Cartoonist

By Katinka Aikins

(Continued from Page One)

It just looks like a pin-figure, and
there's no getting away from it. I
realized the shortcomings of the pin-
figure medium of art, and accord-
ingly I tried to get the death-and-
pain idea across in the face. In or-
der to do this I had to have my
angel leering back over its right
shoulder. I crossed its eyes in an
attempt to portray its agony of
soul, and I accorded it the dental
treatment that a child gives a Hal-
lowe'en pumpkin. The result was
not good but it was very definitely
macabre. I was quite proud of it.
The teacher gave me zero for it be-
cause she thought I was being dis-
respectful. When I showed her my
drawings of Champlain surrender-
ing Quebec she reversed her judg-
ment and gave me two for trying.
I rarely got more than two for any
of my illustrations.

All this has just been leading up
to the fact that I need a cartoonist.
The cartoon that I have in mind is
very simple. The set-up is this. Two
cars, coming very fast from oppo-
site directions, converge upon a
wagon load of hay on a corner. Dis-
aster is not only imminent; it is
unavoidable. In one car the man is
sitting tense and white-faced at the
wheel. His wife, who is either an
escapist or a born fool, admonishes
him gaily — "Don't forget to wish,
George!"

Of course, I realize that the whole
thing is going to fall pretty flat if
people don't know the old supersti-
tion about wishing on a load of hay.
Anybody who doesn't know this old
superstition is going to take one
quick look at the cartoon and then
say in the sour voice that people
use when they don't see cartoons,
"I don't get this. What's so funny
about it anyway?" Naturally I don't
want that happening to my cartoon
so I have thought of one way to
prevent it. The cartoon could be
entitled "Old Superstitions," and
then everyone would know that
wishing on a load of hay was an
old superstition. The great diffi-
culty here is that such a title im-
plies that a whole series of car-
toons concerning old superstitions is
going to follow the first cartoon.
And it isn't. At least not from me,
it isn't, because I can't think of any
more cartoons concerning supersti-
tions, and what's more I'm not going
to try, because I'm sick of the whole
business. I've lots of better things
to do with my time than sitting
around trying to think of funny
captions for old superstitions, or for
anything else if it comes to that.
Right now, if anyone's interested,
I'm going to kick the hell out of a
black cat I saw prowling around a
couple of hours ago. That's what I
think of old superstitions, and that's
what I think of cartoons too.

CONVERSATION PIECE

(Continued from Page Two)

natural verbosity. "Cooper's Snoo-
pers". In that phrase was summed
up the Englishman's defiant con-
tempt for any mere official who

tries to make him hold his tongue.
It just cannot be done.
The Englishman is being told that
he's fighting fascism. And fascism
to him is a conversational bully that
takes you by the throat and says
"Now you're going to listen to me."
It outrages his sense of fair
play that a nation of eighty million
should remain inhibited from the
joys of discourse while a few at
the top can speak as often as they
please. That's his real grudge
against Germany's present rulers.

When Hitler and his associates
are finally overthrown, the happi-
ness of the German people, I imag-
ine, will be great indeed. For many
many years now they have been
compelled to remain mute. The re-
calcitrant ones, those who treasured
the memory of human speech, found
their way to the concentration
camps or, if they still remained ob-
durate, the firing squad. The rest
sank into a torpid silence.

How wild, then, will be their elation
when they recover the use of their
tongues. The novel sensations
in throat and larynx will probably
overwhelm them at first and they
will stutter incoherently just for
the sheer pleasure of making the
same noises that other humans do.
We must on no account expect their
first sounds to be intelligible. The
German people have been through a
terrible ordeal and we must be
tolerant. Their first utterances will
probably be short, caecophonous ex-
plosions: "phlap," "fflut," "agh,"
"boog!" and so on. All this, of
course, in a heavy Germanic accent.

Yes, I am convinced that there is
hope for the world if the people in
England and elsewhere continue to
chatter, prate, rant and give off
oral sound. I hope to hear that vol-
ume of sound swell until all the old
cramping rubbish is swept away
forever. I hope to see a new and
kindlier Europe rise upon the scar-
red battlefields of the old. I hope
that men will never again barter
their God-given powers of human
speech for a dubious piece of bread.
On a flood of loose talk, I hope to
see Utopia sailing majestically into
view.

What, you don't agree with me.
Well, in heaven's name, get up and
say so. Let's talk about it!

JOE'S BUSY WEEK-END

(Continued from Page Three)

crawled over the homemade roof-
ladder and sat atop the sloping
roof. Grease gun and oily rag soon
went into action. Then he saw Jo
below, and her hair turned to gold
as the sun came out. She was still
reading the same page, but he
didn't know that.

He hadn't wanted to rent the cot-
tage this season. It was going to
make a lot of extra work for him.
Yet now, he was rather glad he
had, and he looked again at Jo's
gleaming hair.
"Hullo!" he shouted. "Lovely
morning!"
Jo lost her place willingly at the
sound of his voice, and looked
around.

"Where are you?"
"Up here."
"Oh! She saw him poking his
head around the side of the stone
chimney and laughed.
"Hello. Yes it is perfect." (And
it was now that she had found him
again.)
"Have a beautiful view from
here."

She knew that he was looking
straight at her when he said it, but
pretended not to hear.
"Whatever are you doing up
there?"
Jerry held up two sticky hands
covered with black cement and
shook them expressively.

"Why, do you want to help?"
"Hm. Well . . . maybe." (She
was awfully glad he'd asked.)
"Come on over then and I'll show
you what I'm doing."
His cottage was Jerry's pride and
glory, and he revelled in the chance
to show off his pet.
"All right. Just a minute."
Jerry gave his chimney a last dab
or two and climbed down to gum
up the eaves. Jo came over and
stood by while he oozed the stuff
from the gun in long black dribbles
and filled the seams. He was care-
ful to get the right length and
thickness and it went on in smooth
black lines. It wasn't long before
he found himself telling her all
about his plans for the garden, the
new badminton court, the kitchen
fixtures and all the inside woodwork.
Jo was thrilled.

She sat on a wooden stool he had
given her and moved it forward as
he progressed along the face of the
building and underneath the long,
wide window. She liked the
strength of his fingers as they pressed
the plunger. She liked the
earnest pucker in his forehead
when the line went crooked. She
liked the way he smiled. She liked
the pride he took in doing things
well. As a matter of fact she found
herself liking everything about
him, this boy with the glue-pot . . .
amusing . . . irresistible . . . ador-

able, charming young hermit. (Or
so he liked to call himself.)
The morning flowed into after-
noon and Jerry began to paint.
Round he went with blue paint in
hand, and Jo followed filling in the
window-ledge with white. She was
having the time of her young life
and enthusiastically dabbed her face
with tiny white freckles with every
stroke of the brush. Maybe that was
because Jerry insisted on wiping
them off with his pipy-smelling
handkerchief. He was awkwardly gentle,
and she stood there patiently
wrinkling up her pretty nose as he
rubbed away the marks. Her heart
somehow skipped a beat, and she
liked the nearness of her corduroy-
shirted giant.

Jerry worked hard all day. And
so did Jo in a subtler way. That
night he took her for a row on the
lake. They went by way of Pirate's
Point out of the sight of cottages
and people. They talked softly and
listened for the cry of the loon over
the water. She saw his cigarette
glow in the darkness—his silhou-
ette against the moon—the shining
edge of his gently dipping paddle.
It was after twelve when they got
in and Jo remembered that Sun-
day had begun—the last day of her
week-end.

Jo munched an apple contentedly
and looked at Jerry. He had
promised he'd show her some of
the places he liked to call his own.
He had lived there for years in the
summer and knew every inch of
the place. But the road was par-
ticularly bad, so they parked the
car and trudged through ankle-
deep rocks down to the quaint, old
mill. She found a squashed rum
and butter candy in her jacket
pocket and shared it with scrup-
ulous exactness, while they sat on
a rickety wooden bridge. Jerry
should have got it all really, be-
cause he managed to juggle three
stones successfully and won his bet.
On an on they went, past his fa-
vourite trout stream and berry field,
until at last, tired and laughing
they reached the side of the moun-

tain where he kept his fortress—
two huge overlapping rocks that
formed a hollow, well-padded with
fir boughs dragged there in his Boy
Scout days. And there they stop-
ped. The view was glorious, but
Jo shivered as she looked into the
depths below. In the distance the
lake was a silver pool, and a thin
mist rising above the neighbouring
heights was jagged at the edges,
like a cold man's breath on a win-
try day.

Jerry put his arm around her
shoulder and kissed the back of her
loose wind-blown hair, and Jo rested
against his protective body.
Nature seemed alive and willing to
tell her secrets . . . where the rabbit
had burrowed . . . and man kept
his heart. And this was the day
she'd have to go back to the city.
She shivered slightly and Jerry
gathered her into his strong arms
giving her the heat of his body in a
long, tender kiss. . . Jo struggled
just for a moment and he pressed
her to him.

"Jo honey! Don't . . . stay close,
sweet. And Jo, snuggling closer,
thought of the summer ahead, and
knew she hadn't really intended
moving anyway.

Co-ed: I had a date with an ab-
sent-minded professor last night.
Co-ed No. 2: How do you know
he's absent-minded?
Co-ed: He gave me a zero this
morning.
—N.Y.U. VARIETIES.

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